New rail link between Bhubaneswar and Delhi

3315. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to open new rail link between Bhubaneswar and Delhi—a shorter connectivity *via* Keonjhar;

(b) how far this would help the industrial sector; and

(c) what is the time-frame within which the proposed new line would be completed and put into operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A new rail line between Daitari and Banspani (*via* Keonjhar) has been completed and commissioned to goods traffic on 15.02.2007. The line is mainly intended to fulfil the traffic demands of the upcoming steel plants and industries situated in the nearby areas.

Refund rules

3316. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Consumer Commission has advised his Ministry for making refund rules user-friendly and simple;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto;

(c) how much refund amount is not paid to the rail passengers since last three years;

(d) what are the reasons behind this refund amount unclaimed; and

(e) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to simplify the present rules for getting refund amount to rail passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (d) Do not arise.

(c) No separate date is maintained.

(e) Rules for refund are already quite simple and passenger friendly. The passenger, who has paid the fare in cash, is granted due refund at the station itself on surrendering the ticket within the prescribed time limits. Thereafter, a Ticket Deposit Receipt is issued to him and this case for refund is examined in the concerned Refund Office.

' Difference over Salem Railway Division

3317. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:
SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has convened a meeting of Chief Minister's of Tamil Nadu and Kerala to sort out the differences regarding the Salem Railway Division;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there is demand for creating of a new railway zone comprising the railway lines in the west coast; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Reservations have been expressed by Very Important Persons from Kerala over the finalised jurisdiction of Salem Division. To arrive at an amicable solution to the problem, both the Chief Minister of Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been invited for a joint meeting.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Demands have been received for setting up of a new Railway Zone named West Coast Zone with headquarters at Trivandrum or Kochi covering areas of entire Penisular West Coast of India.

As per the criteria laid down by Railway Reforms Committee and Advisors' Committee, new zones are set up keeping in view factors like